

Montana DEQ Forest Fire Smoke Advisory

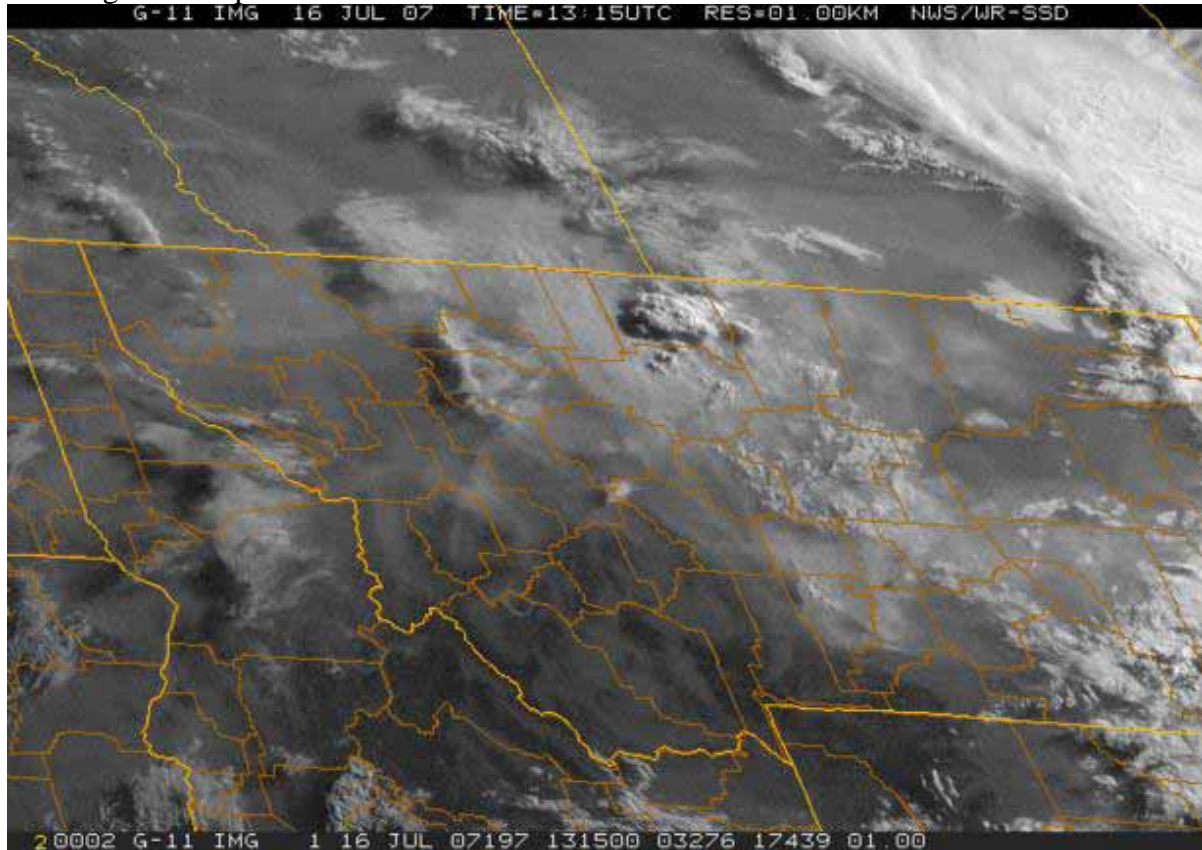
July 16 2007

10:00 AM Monday July 16

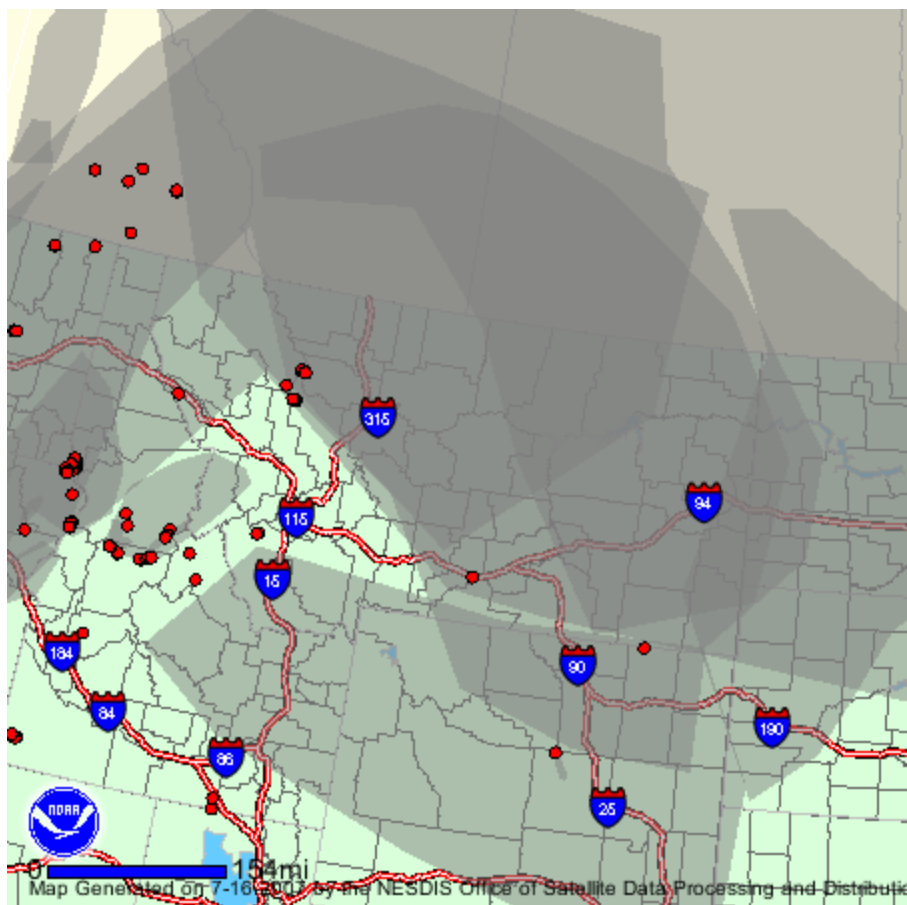
Current Situation

MODERATE levels of smoke are impacting much of western Montana. Kalispell, Missoula, Hamilton Butte, and Choueau are all currently seeing smoke at that level. The smoke levels should improve later this morning but will likely creep up again late in the afternoon or evening. Other areas that only have haze to deal with could see increased levels of smoke at the surface for a few hours. See the forecast below for details. Smoke conditions near the active fires in Montana are expected to be UNHEALTHY or worse. Residents near active fires or experiencing noticeable smoke levels should use the VISIBILITY GUIDELINES to determine smoke levels in their area and guide their activity decisions.

Morning satellite photo centered on Great Falls:



This morning's analysis from NOAA's satellite services division shows the active fires in Montana and the smoke plumes combining and spreading downwind(the analyzed smoke is based on yesterday's satellite coverage, the fire detects are based on last nights satellite coverage)



Red indicates hot spot detected. Grey represents smoke seen by satellite. Fire size is exaggerated for visibility at this scale

To identify individual fires on graphic above go here:

http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/lg_fire2.php

Real time particulate information is currently available in most of the larger urban areas from several different sources including: DEQ run PM-10 BAMS and PM2.5 BAMS, NWS ASOS visibility monitors, and USFS remote access Nephelometers and BAMS.

This morning's smoke report is below, comparing particulate levels where we have information to MDEQ's Forest Fire health advisory levels.

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/SmokeCategories.asp>

Updated 10 AM July 16, 2007

Locations and severity of forest fire smoke reports since midnight of the date above at reporting stations.

<u>HAZARDOUS</u>	
VERY UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY	
UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS	
MODERATE	Kalispell T24 Missoula T24 Hamilton T24 Butte T24 Choteau T8

T1(x) One-hour TEOM or BAM value (number of values)
 T8(x) Eight-hour average TEOM or BAM value(number of values)
 T24 24 hour average TEOM or BAM value
 Vis(x) Visibility value(number of hours)
 Vis(am/pm) Visibility value from twice/day reporting stations
 (est) estimate

Local impacts in areas immediately adjacent to active fires are expected to exceed some or all of the advisory levels. DEQ recommends the use of local visibility guidelines

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/VisibilityRanges.asp>

to evaluate possible health risks and make informed activity decisions.

Forecast

Smoke will continue to drift up into western Montana along with a southerly flow aloft today. Winds should remain pretty light today so dispersion will be limited and little net transport of smoke out of the state will occur under the high pressure ridge aloft. Smoke levels in western Montana will likely increase for the next 24 hours after a brief improvement this afternoon as the mixing height grows. The smoke aloft will mix down to the surface for few hours later this morning and some areas will see a temporary increase in particulate levels for a few hours then. Smoke impacts in the areas downwind of local fires are expected to be UNHEALTHY or worse. Residents near active fires need to remain aware of current conditions and use the visibility guidelines:

<http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/VisibilityRanges.asp>

to guide their activity decisions as the situation changes.

John Coefield
Meteorologist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Jcoefield@mt.gov